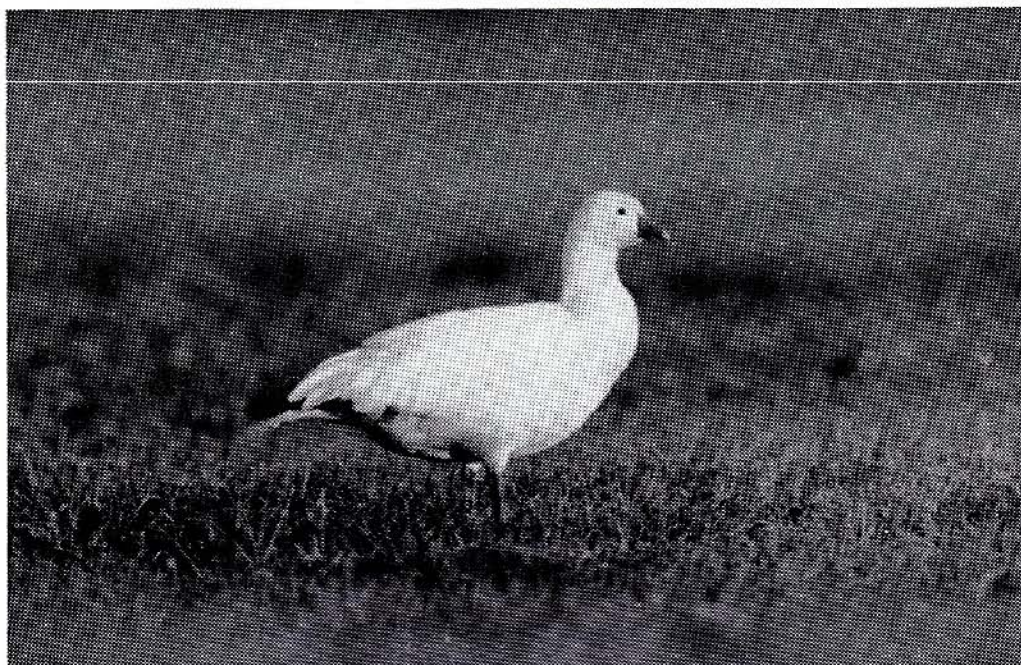


**ROSS' GOOSE (*CHEN ROSSII*) OBSERVED
ON EUFAULA NATIONAL WILDLIFE
REFUGE**

Daniel Drennen



Ross' Goose, Eufaula NWR

Photo by Bob Sargent

On 17 February 1989 Gussie Arnett and Helen Kittinger of the Birmingham Audubon Society reported to me that they had observed a Ross' Goose (*Chen rossii*) feeding with a flock of Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*) at the Lakepoint Marina State Park. The following day Dr. Greenberg of Columbus College verified the sighting and since then I, along with many individuals from various bird groups, have observed the goose throughout Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge and adjacent areas. The sighting is only the third confirmed record for this species in Alabama.

On 23 February, I observed the bird at close range when it was within one meter of a Snow Goose (*Chen caerulescens*), so a good study of comparative size and morphological details could be made.

The Ross' goose seemed to feed in harmony with the Canada

ALABAMA BIRDLIFE

Geese since I observed only one instance of aggressive behavior (straightened, lowered neck with hissing) by the Canadas toward the Ross'. It was reported, however, that on 23 February some Canadas were actively pursuing and nipping the Ross'.

Bent (*Life Histories of North American Wild Fowl*) described the Ross' Goose as tamer than other species of geese that visited the California Region. The bird observed here also appeared to be less shy than the Canadas and Snows. Even after five days of being observed and harassed by birders it remained somewhat complacent. *Daniel Drennen, Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge, Route 2, Box 97-B, Eufaula, Alabama 36027-9294.*

ROSS' GOOSE (*CHEN ROSSII*) SIGHTED IN COLBERT COUNTY

Damien J. Simbeck

On 22 February 1988, at approximately 1500 CST, as I was driving along River Road east of the Shoals area I noticed two geese on a pond about eight km east of Highway 133. My initial impression was that both birds were Snow Geese (*Chen caerulescens*), one white and one blue morph. I stopped and began studying them with a Baush and Lomb Discoverer at a distance of about 30 meters in good light. While looking at the white bird, I immediately noticed a small blue patch at the base of its bill and absence of a dark grin patch, the latter being characteristic of Snow Geese. These are distinct features of the Ross' Goose (*Chen Rossii*), a species with only one previously confirmed record in Alabama.

I continued to watch the birds for several minutes, and as the two moved side by side I could see that the white goose was distinctly smaller and shorter necked than the Blue Goose. I approached the birds, attempting to take photographs, until they flew, then watched as they circled the pond several times and finally settled on the opposite end of the lake.

I immediately called Paul Kittle who joined me on a return trip to the pond. We found both geese still there and swimming with a small group of Mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*). We studied the birds until about 1545 and later notified other birders of the sighting. Throughout